



BUFFALO CITY COUNCIL MINUTES May 2, 2022

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the City of Buffalo City Council was called to order on May 2, 2022 at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers of the City Center at 212 Central Avenue.

The following members were present: Council Members Teri Lachermeier, Jameson Wakefield, Nick O'Rourke, and Steve Downer. Absent: Scott Enter.

Also in attendance: Administrator Lauren Bodin, Assistant Administrator Taylor Gronau, City Clerk Susan Johnson, Community Planning & Economic Development Director David Kelly, Utilities Director Jason Meusburger, Finance Director Kelly Horn, Police Chief Pat Budke, Water Superintendent Cara Hesse, and Parks and Rec Director Lee Ryan.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Lachermeier thanked the Chamber for putting on the State of the City event that was presented to local businesses last week. The event was taped and will be on the website soon.

Mayor Lachermeier said she is getting reports about the railroad crossing at Culvers not being in good shape. She said it is easier for residents to reach out to the railroad directly. She said residents can call the City Center to get the contact information for the railroad.

Mayor read a letter from Brownie Troop #18216 regarding the importance of bees and butterflies in our world.

OPEN FORUM

Tina Diedrick introduced herself to the Council. She is a candidate for the Wright County's first commissioner district that is will be open due to Chris Husom not running again. She shared her background with the Council. She is excited and energized to run for Commissioner.

Matt Roehlke of 400 Sigrid Drive approached the Council regarding a transformer being placed in his front yard. He said when neighborhood was designed these were put in the back yard. He's not sure why the change is proposed to move them to the front yard. He feels it is an eyesore and will devalue the property. He suggested it be put in the southeast corner of the lot.

Utilities and IT Director Meusburger said that transformers are being placed in

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the front yard for quicker response time. He said staff is still discussing the location with the property owners. He said access is important especially with fences.

Council Member Downer said he feels the trend is putting utilities on the street side for the reasons Meusburger mentioned. Generally putting things out front for access is the way to go to avoid issues down the road.

Amy Wittman of 1502 3rd Avenue South & Erin Walsh of 208 2nd Street NW stated they are representing a grass roots citizen group combination of Friends of the Community Center & Buffalo Arts Center. They are here to promote a fundraising event for the group. Wittman said that Rose of Second Hand Rose is having a Cheap Thrills Yard Sale on June 9-11 from 9:00 AM-5:00 PM & 12th 10:00 AM-3:00 PM. They are looking for donations. Contact Amy, Rose & David. They will pick up items for free.

Dan Pollack 507 Central Avenue asked that railroad contact information be posted on the city’s website. He noted that he agrees with Matt on the transformer boxes. He feels they can block visibility and they are ugly.

AGENDA ADDITIONS

6F. Recommendation for Hire – Consent Agenda
Adjourn to Fire Department Ribbon Cutting on Wednesday, May 11 @ 5:00 PM

COUNCIL REPORTS AND RECOGNITION

Student liaison Scherber said that last Friday was National College Decision Day. AVID classes went to Target Field and spring sports continue.

Council Member Wakefield recognized and thanked the clean-up days crew that worked last Friday and Saturday.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of April 18 meeting Minutes
Approval of Claims Listings

Council Meeting ~ 05/02/2022

Payroll Dates		Paid Date			
04/03/2022- 04/16/2022		4/21/2022		Payroll =	\$286,096.21
A/P Check Runs	EFT/DRAFTS	Checks	Total	Check Numbers	
4/21/2022	\$ 128,625.64	\$ 17,450.41	\$ 146,076.05	126991-127008	
4/27/2022	\$ 230,098.36	\$ 744,290.73	\$ 974,389.09	127009-127116	
		Grand Total	1,120,465.14		

Call for Hearing on Past Due Accounts

PUBLIC HEARING MAY 16, 2022

PROPERTY ID	ADDRESS	AMOUNT*	DESCRIPTION
103-124-004610	1724 Kestrel Circle	\$738.08	Utilities
103-163-002010	1800 11th Street NE	\$267.46	Utilities
103-500-202402	1414 Pulaski Rd	\$413.84	Utilities

*Amount plus interest at 6%. A \$40 filing fee has been included in the above amounts in the event they are not paid in full by November 30, 2022.

Personnel Matters

- Approve of hiring Elizabeth (Beth) Opheim as Engineering Technician
- Approve of Nels Anderson to fill Streets Assistant Superintendent Vacancy
- Approve of hiring Corissa Aronson as Finance Clerk
- Approve the hiring of Justin Utecht as Meter Reader

Council Member Downer moved to approve of the consent agenda, seconded by Council Member O'Rourke.

Jameson Wakefield	Scott Enter	Teri Lachermeier	Nick O'Rourke	Steve Downer
Aye	Absent	Aye	Aye	Aye

Motion carries 4-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Ordinance No. 2022-2 Amending Section 16-2 Conservation Measures
 Water Superintendent Hesse recommended the adoption of Ordinance 2022-2 Amending Section 16-2 Conservation Measures.

Council Member Downer said this was discussed recently. Council Member Wakefield said the new times make more sense.

Council Member Downer moved to approve of Ordinance 2022-2 Amending Section 16-2 Conservation Measures, seconded by Council Member Wakefield.

Jameson Wakefield	Scott Enter	Teri Lachermeier	Nick O'Rourke	Steve Downer
Aye	Absent	Aye	Aye	Aye

Motion carries 4-0.

Council Member Wakefield asked Hesse about watering seed/sod and if she

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would explain that process. Hesse said that the Water Department will be issuing 30-day exemptions for watering of new seed/sod. Residents can contact the Water Department or City Center Staff for the permit and to discuss the process.

Adopt Resolution 2022-14 Layout Approval for State Project 8604-37, TH 25 Reconstruction Project

Consulting City Engineer Kannas reviewed the project's history to this point. He mentioned the public meeting in March with property owners to gain feedback which offered an online option to view the project. Overall, the project was well received.

There was a concern about loss of parking on Highway 25 south of Montrose Boulevard on the west side. Property owners in this area rely on this parking for visitors and service and delivery vehicles as they have short driveways and no access to the rear of their property. After conversations with MNDOT it was deemed accessible to remove this portion of the left turn lane to be able to accommodate on street parking.

Final design and bidding documents need to be in by the end of this year. He is already talking with MNDOT to preorder materials due to the length of lead time on materials.

Kannas recommended that the Council approve of Resolution 2022-14 Layout Approval for State Project 8604-37. This would be the formal adoption of the project.

Mayor appreciates staff working with property owners, safety features in place, the lake access and making things more friendly to the downtown businesses. She likes the plan and is happy with it. Kannas said the safety of the area and crossing Highway 25 was a very important piece of the project. Closing the entrance from Highway 25 into Sturges Park by the gate is also a part of the project.

Council Member Wakefield asked about an underpass for pedestrians in median area. Kannas said in studying the underpass option it would have to be south of 2nd Street by the triangle. Cost was half a million plus. Based on location he didn't feel it would get used. Most people go the shortest path of least resistance.

Council Member Downer asked when bids would come in. Kannas said likely the end of 2022 early 2023 with construction in 2023. Downer also asked if inflation is built into bids. Kannas said estimates are a few months old already and there will be an opportunity for them to rise.

Council Member Wakefield moved to adopt Resolution 2022-14 Layout Approval

for State Project 8604-37, Council Member Downer seconded.

Jameson Wakefield	Scott Enter	Teri Lachermeier	Nick O'Rourke	Steve Downer
Aye	Absent	Aye	Aye	Aye

Motion carries 4-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Division Street from TH 25 to First Avenue NE, Reconstruction

Consulting Engineer Kannas said the scope of the project is to replace pavers in roadway with asphalt. Will maintain pavers in sidewalk. Project scope is to keep existing curb and sidewalk in place as much as possible. The watermain is 1930's cast iron. There is no sanitary sewer in project area as that is in the alleys. The project is looking at removing bump outs in the middle of the block and add parking spaces. The trees aren't doing well and with excavation they will plan to remove them. Property owners have been notified and sent a survey, with an open house scheduled next week.

Mayor thinks the feeling of that street is unique. She asked that if business owners want to keep some of the esthetics such as pavers, the bump out, please take that into consideration. Council Member O'Rourke said he feels it is part of character of the street.

Resident Meredith Johansen commented regarding the bump outs. She said that sometimes it is difficult to see pedestrians and the bump out gives a logical place to cross the street.

Council Member Downer wondered if the trees would be replaced.

Kannas asked for direction from the Council to proceed with design and to receive bids.

Council Member Downer asked if this project is in the budget. Administrator Bodin said it is not, but the ARPA funds are allowable for this.

Council Member Downer moved for staff to move forward on the concept plan and bring the plan back to the Council for final decision, Council Member Wakefield seconded.

Jameson Wakefield	Scott Enter	Teri Lachermeier	Nick O'Rourke	Steve Downer
Aye	Absent	Aye	Aye	Aye

Motion carries 4-0.

Adoption of Resolution 2022-13 Electing Standard Allowance Available Under the Revenue Loss Provision of the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund Established Under the American Rescue Plan Act 13

Finance Director Horn gave background on ARPA. Buffalo was awarded just under \$1.8 million. She described eligible uses per the Treasury guidance.

ARPA Final Rule allows election of standard allowance of up to \$10 million in lost public sector revenue. It allows flexibility and streamlines reporting to the Treasury. It does not preclude use on water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure. Horn recommends adoption of Resolution 2022-13 Electing Standard Allowance Available Under the Revenue Loss Provision of the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund Established Under the American Rescue Plan Act 13.

Designated Uses

Water Reclamation Pre-Treatment Improvements

- \$ 870,070 – Construction Contract – MN Mechanical Solutions
- \$ 179,930 – Indirect Cost Budget (engineering, admin, contingency)
- \$ 100,000 – HACH Analyzer Component
- \$1,150,000 – Total Project Budget
- \$ 167,078 Costs to date (engineering and HACH analyzer)
- Potential additional funding from Wright County ARPA Funds
 - Award – 50% match up to \$597,000

Bulk Water Filling Station

- \$ 68,760 – Purchase, install and setup
- \$ 25,000 – Requested for concrete driveway

Mayor asked how staff can show this in a transparent format. Horn said she is asking Council to give approval for each project before moving forward on projects. She would bring each project to the Council for approval on spending. Questions can be answered in public, and staff can get direction. She noted that we have until 2024 to obligate funds and 2026 to use them.

Council Member Downer said he liked bringing projects to Council for knowledge. He feels the Water/Wastewater projects are well targeted. Staff can bring priorities to Council for approval.

Council Member Downer moved to approve of Resolution 2022-13 Electing Standard Allowance Available Under the Revenue Loss Provision of the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund Established Under the American Rescue Plan Act 13, Council Member O'Rourke seconded.

Jameson Wakefield	Scott Enter	Teri Lachermeier	Nick O'Rourke	Steve Downer
Aye	Absent	Aye	Aye	Aye

Motion carries 4-0.

Horn said that the City has completed an application for Wright County ARPA funds. Staff will come back to the Council if that money is received because that will change available funds.

Horn reviewed the following list of potential uses for the funding.

- \$340,000-Division Street Reconstruction
- \$633,400 West Pulaski Grinder Station Project
- \$ 25,000 Concrete Driveway for Filling Station
- \$132,000 Public Safety Vehicles (CIP)
- \$ 17,000 Water Treatment Plant Reclaim Pumps
- 2022 Street Maintenance Project
- 2022 CIP Equipment Purchases

Approve of Out of State Travel for Education Conference for Senior Accountant Chrissie Estrada

Finance Director Horn reported that Senior Accountant Estrada was awarded a scholarship to attend the GFOA annual conference in Austin Texas. The registration fee is covered by the scholarship. Staff is recommending the City cover her airfare and lodging. The Personnel Policy supports education and training related to the employee's job description and has previously reimbursed staff for national conference expenses.

Council Member Downer moved approval of the out of state travel expenses for Estrada to the GFOA conference in Austin, Texas in the amount of \$1,448.19 for travel and lodging, Council Member O'Rourke seconded.

Jameson Wakefield	Scott Enter	Teri Lachermeier	Nick O'Rourke	Steve Downer
Aye	Absent	Aye	Aye	Aye

Motion carries 4-0.

Determine 2023 Budget Workshop Dates

Finance Director Horn asked if Council would concur with the proposed dates for budget workshops.

- 1). Tuesday, June 21st - 5pm
- 2). Monday, August 1st - 5pm
- 3). Monday, November 21st - 5pm

Consensus of the Council was that dates presented would work.

STAFF UPDATES

Staff gave general updates to the Council.

OTHER-CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Lachermeier closed the meeting at 8:22 PM to discuss Dague Avenue Improvements, acquisition of easement. Attorney Dege said meeting is being closed due to attorney client privilege as this matter is in litigation.

Mayor reopened the meeting at 8:33 PM.

Council Member Downer moved to accept the settlement offer of \$26,500 for Parcel 16 and a \$3,000 escrow account for trees lost up to 12 months after construction, Council Member Wakefield seconded.

Jameson Wakefield	Scott Enter	Teri Lachermeier	Nick O'Rourke	Steve Downer
Aye	Absent	Aye	Aye	Aye

Motion carries 4-0.

ADJOURN TO FIRE DEPARTMENT RIBBON CUTTING ON WEDNESDAY, May 11 @ 5:00 PM

Mayor adjourned the meeting at 8:35 PM to the Fire Department ribbon cutting on Wednesday, May 11 @ 5:00 PM.

Attest:

Teri Lachermeier, Mayor

Susan Johnson, City Clerk